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CAUGHT!

Briatore ban

Flavio Briatore and Pat Symonds have effectively been banned from any future involvement in motor racing following the extraordinary Singapore race-fixing scandal.

The World Motor Sport Council found that Nelson Piquet jr, Briatore and Symonds conspired to cause a deliberate crash at the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix. Renault F1, which, under article 123 of the International Sporting Code, is responsible for the actions of its employees, was found to be in breach of Articles 151(c) and

or grant any license to any Team or other entity engaging Mr Briatore in any capacity whatsoever.

'It also hereby instructs all officials present at FIA-sanctioned events not to permit Mr Briatore access to any areas under the FIA's jurisdiction. Furthermore, it does not intend to renew any Superlicence granted to any driver who is associated (through a management contract or otherwise) with Mr Briatore, or any entity or individual associated with Mr Briatore.

'In determining that such instructions should

be applicable for an unlimited period, the World Motor Sport Council has had regard not only to the severity of the breach in which Mr Briatore was complicit but also to his actions in continuing to deny his participation in the breach, despite all the evidence.'

point 2(c) of Chapter IV of Appendix L of the Code, and Articles 3.2, 30.3 and / or 39.1 of the Formula 1 Sporting Regulations.


'The Council considers Renault F1's breaches relating to the 2008 Singapore Grand Prix to be of unparalleled severity,' explained an FIA release. 'Renault F1's breaches not only compromised the integrity of the sport but also endangered the lives of spectators, officials, other competitors and Nelson Piquet jr himself.'

The statement went on to explain that Briatore faces what may amount to a lifetime ban.

'The FIA does not intend to sanction any International Event, Championship, Cup, Trophy, Challenge or Series involving Mr Briatore in any capacity whatsoever,

be applicable for an unlimited period, the World Motor Sport Council has had regard not only to the severity of the breach in which Mr Briatore was complicit but also to his actions in continuing to deny his participation in the breach, despite all the evidence.'

Similar sanctions have been applied to Symonds, though in his case limited to five years. His more lenient sentence was due to his 'acceptance that he took part in the conspiracy, and due to his communication to the meeting of the World Motor Sport Council that it was to his "eternal regret and shame" that he took part in the conspiracy.'

The outcome is sure to spark debate and the fall out caused by these bans could be significant. 

STRAIGHT TALK

Stars come out for safety



KEVIN BORRAS

eSafety Challenge highlights the future of road-car (and racecar?) technology

It's probably not a widely known fact, but the Gatsco speed camera was invented by a racing driver who wanted to find a way of recording his lap times more accurately. Indeed, motorsport has had a fairly marked influence on the passenger car market over the years, including the use of telematics technology to download lap diagnostics to the pits - a system that has been utilised in the intelligent transport systems arena for years - but have the tables been turned?

The FIA's eSafety Challenge, held at the Vallelunga circuit on the outskirts of Rome in early September and hosted by the

Automobile Club of Italy, showcased five vehicle safety technologies that have the same, invaluable, unarguable goal: to save lives. Electronic Stability Control (ESC), which applies braking pressure to individual wheels to help stabilise the vehicle and prevent it from skidding; Warning and Emergency Braking Systems, Blind Spot Monitoring, Lane Support Systems and Speed Alert were ably and spectacularly demonstrated by F1's Giancarlo Fisichella, Timo Glock, Heikki Kovalainen, Robert Kubica, eight-time Le Mans 24 Hour champion, Tom Kristensen, and DTM's Susie Stoddart in a variety of vehicles, ranging from an Audi A3 to a Mercedes truck. All the demonstrations successfully proved that the technologies work, but it was ESC that most impressed the drivers. Braking hard at speed on a soaking, slippery


surface, skilled drivers like Kubica and Stoddart were powerless to prevent their ESC-less cars skidding off track, but once the system was turned on, performing the same manoeuvre produced an entirely unremarkable, but thoroughly safe, result.

It was my job to interview the drivers after each demonstration and, although they were never likely to say anything derogatory about technology that could save their own lives or those of their families, off camera they were all genuinely impressed by what eSafety had

have the tables now been turned?

to offer. Stoddart insisted that in future she would insist on only buying a car that was equipped with ESC, while Kubica described the systems as 'critical in order to prevent an accident'.

It's evident then that the technology is out there. As Fisichella succinctly put it: 'Even as an experienced racing driver, it's easy to make a mistake on the road. Nothing is more important than the safety of my family, so when I am driving them I like to know that the latest safety features are installed on my car so if I do make a mistake, or another driver makes one that has an impact on me, we are protected. Why would you not want that?' That sentiment is hard to argue with.

Kevin Borras is editor-in-chief of Thinking Highways and publishing director of H3B Media, producers of the European Commission-funded TV documentary, Thinking Cars (www.thinkingcars.com) 



Toyota F1 driver Timo Glock, finds out just how good Electronic Stability Control really is